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NEWSLETTER — *"We need adequate defense, but every arms dollar we spend above adequacy has a long-term weakening effect upon the nation and its security."* – Pres. Eisenhower — January 1989

Volume 3, Number 1 — Editor: Mark Bagley

Fear of Soviet Changes Sells America Short

By Richard J. Barnet, taken from the L.A. Times-

The American reaction, both official and unofficial, since Mikhail S. Gorbachev's historic speech at the U.N. makes it clear that the Cold War will not end just because it is over.

It is over because the conditions that produced it have radically changed. The Soviet Union is softening its ideology of global struggle into a global vision of pragmatic humanism. It has replaced Stalin's paranoia with a spectacular call for mutual trust backed by a series of largely unilateral concessions, including withdrawal from Afghanistan and the promise to demobilize half a million troops. Gorbachev says that he wants to reduce the role of force in international relations, and he called for cooperative assault by East and West alike on the environmental threats that hang over all humanity. Most interestingly, he is saying that these welcome moves are not concessions, because they will make the Soviet Union more secure.

After almost 70 years of U.S.-Soviet hostility, the suspicion of the Reagan Administration is understandable. But suspicion is not a policy. Much less understandable is the curious detachment and ambivalence that Gorbachev's efforts at reform have produced in Washington. Three years of White House "spin control" has minimized the importance of what Gorbachev says and does, counseled caution and delay, raised questions about whether the United States should "help" him, and emphasized the shakiness of his hold on power.

There's a fundamental question raised by this extraordinary Soviet leader that the Reagan Administration never answered: Is it in the U.S.'s interest that he succeeds? To me the answer is self-evident. If Gorbachev is deposed, his successor is sure to be more of a throwback, especially since Gorbachev will be accused inside the Soviet Union of selling out communism at home and making foreign policy concessions without getting anything in return. The sooner agreements can be reached and the broader they can be, the better chance there is that the positive developments from the Soviet Union will be irreversible.

But there are powerful and influential voices in this country crying "Trojan Horse!" They understand precisely why Gorbachev is seeking to moderate and modernize the Soviet economy. . . The legacy of the Brezhnev era was the isolation of the Soviet Union because of its belligerent posture and reputation, a loss of the Communist Party's legitimacy because of its failure to deliver on its promises to the Soviet people, and an economy that cannot meet the basic needs of a modern industrial society. All of Gorbvachev's reforms are directed to the solution of these problems.

A Soviet Union that can generate greater economic power and provide more economic security and opportunity for its people would indeed be a formidable model and a serious competitor in world affairs. A Soviet Union able to play the role that Gorbachev wants it to play challenges the U.S. to carry out a *perestroika* of our own. Ending the arms race requires restructuring the many institutions that now depend on it. The conditions in our two countries are very different, but both are burdened by military expenditures that keep society from investing in its future and by a loss of confidence in government that seems unable to meet the needs of the people. (A democratic system in which less than half of the people bother to vote is in need of revitalization.)

To fear Gorbachev's success is a vote of no confidence in America. It is to succumb to the old fear that American leaders cannot protect American interests at the bargaining table. But if agreements are specific, clear, verifiable where appropriate and in the mutual interest of both sides they can help release money and energy to deal with our two most urgent security threats: an economy out of control and a physical environment demanding payment for generations of rape and neglect. To believe that the U.S. is less capable than the Soviet Union of reorienting its economy and its foreign policy to the demands of the 21st Century is surely to sell America short. But to respond to Gorbachev's invitation for a new political relationship requires rethinking the American national interest for the first time in almost 50 years.

Barnet served in the State Dept. under Kennedy and is a senior fellow at the Inst. for Policy Studies in Washington.

Celebrate the End of the Cold War!

Next SNAP Meeting

Sunday, February 5th, 7:00 pm

Music • Poetry • Refreshments • Fun

Information on the Soviet initiatives and U.S. responses.
The Cold War is over, but we don't all know it yet.
There is still much work to be done and changes to be made.
But, let us now celebrate the accomplishments of the past year.

Children are welcome, childcare is provided.

Place: The Scheidlinger's, 393 Mt. Tom Rd., Bishop
Call 873-8439 for directions or information.

An Inspirational Letter

Dear Friends At SNAP,

Back in March when we went out to Reclaim the Test Site, I went over the fence and enjoyed my entire arrest procedure wearing a lei of paper cranes given to me at the Peace Camp. I noticed on the lei a small note with a name and address and the inscription: "With the wish for the complete abolition of nuclear weapons and a prayer for world peace." The address was in Hiroshima. I was quite moved by this and wrote to the person who had folded the cranes, explaining my use of them, and inspiration from them.

Enclosed then is a copy of the letter I received in return. I thought it moving and inspirational and might help get people out to the Test Site in '89. I'm sure Sumiko Izawa would be encouraged that her efforts are reaching even more Americans.

Peace,
Jim Parker, Lee Vining, Calif.

Dear Mr. Jim Parker,

Thank you very much for your letter. I am sorry for having been slow in replying to it as I don't understand English.

I feel heartened that people like you are active in various ways for the world peace. I have been folding small cranes with the prayers for the world peace and the abolition of nuclear weapons. This year I folded 13,400 cranes and made 100 leis.

On August 6th, 1945 when the A-bomb was dropped, I was outdoors about 1.7 kilometers away from the epicenter. Miraculously, I survived with only heat burns on my both legs. However, the tragic scene, like a picture of hell, at the time will never fade from my memory.

At 70 years, I am now quite old. I am getting frail and sickly. But I still hope to continue to fold small cranes with my prayers.

I hope that you will stay in good health and continue your work for the abolition of nuclear weapons and world peace.

Yours sincerely,
Sumiko Izawa
29-31, 1-Chome
Kami-Nakushina
Higashi-Ku, Hiroshima, Japan

"It appears that the spread of nuclear weapons is outrunning the institutions set up to control it. . .

A new Administration in Washington and a new atmosphere in U.S.-Soviet relations make this an ideal time to renew our commitment to nuclear non-proliferation . . .

Significant progress is being made to control the accumulation of nuclear arms by the U.S. and the Soviet Union. However, our celebrations must not divert us for even a moment from the peril of permitting nuclear arms to fall into the hands of people with fewer inhibitions about putting them to use. In the arms-control field, there is no higher priority than preventing even one more nation from getting the bomb."

— Warren Christopher, former deputy secretary of state, Carter Administration (L.A. Times editorial, 1-16-89).

"He (President Bush) should propose a plan to divert 1% of U.S. military spending to peaceful purposes. The commitment should be unconditional, just as Gorbachev's commitment to reduce troops is, but he should challenge the Soviets to divert an equal amount of military funds into a cooperative venture with the U.S. . . If Bush is to restore the U.S. to a leadership role on the world stage, he must be bold, imaginative and prompt in his actions.

For but 1% of a huge military budget, the cost of only 6 stealth bombers ($3 billion), he could send the message that the U.S. is not merely willing to cut arms; we are also willing to work with others to build for peace."

— Harold Willens & Eugene J Carroll, Jr., Center for Defense Information (L.A. Times editorial, 1-10-89).

Dear Mr. President

The following is excerpted from a letter sent Jan. 21 to our new President, George Bush, and passed on to us.

Dear Mr. President,

The phrases I noted during your (inaugural) address were: decent and civil; not the sum of our possessions; what it means to be a loyal friend; better hearts and finer souls; high moral principles; kinder the face of the nation; kinder the face of the world; transcending material things; make hard choices; turn to the resources we have; goodness and courage of the American people; the age of the offered hand.

My own dream of world peace and friendship ranks humanitarianism even above nationalism. . . I would like to suggest that in order to involve the goodness and courage of the American people, you proclaim and promote a PEACE RACE for the HUMAN RACE in which everyone is automatically a winner. There could be local and regional contests for suggestions of activities which would lead to greater peace. . .

The vision I hold and predict has as its ultimate goal the transformation of military forces into Peace Corps activities. As a first step, I envision the U.S. extending compassion and brotherly love to stricken Armenia by offering the services of the Corps of Engineers to help rebuild its cities and towns. Such an act could "disarm the world" and replace a clenched fist with the offering hand.

Since in a PEACE RACE, it is ok to jump the gun, I also offer a suggestion for domestic peace and the cooperation of government services. Let the about-to-be-closed-down military bases be used as locations for social assistance programs for the homeless, the unemployed, and refugees from the inner cities. An immediate pilot project might begin at Camp Roberts, already abandoned for many years in the heart of California's rich agricultural land, complete with a vast array of buildings in need of repair, served by major transportation arteries, and far removed from existing overcrowded neighborhoods that might object to new neighbors.

Thank you for considering my "offering hand."

Sincerely,
Mollie Starbuck, Crowley Lake

Reclaim The Test Site II

Non-violent Demonstration at the Nevada Test Site Let's Stop Nuclear Weapons Testing!

April 7-16, 1989 • Tax Day Rally, April 15 - Taxation Without Annihilation

Join thousands of people from around the world to demand of the United States government an end to nuclear testing.

The American Peace Test (APT) is once again sponsoring a major action at the Nevada Test site. Many people from the Eastern Sierra have participated in such actions over the past two years. We hope you will join us this year. If you went to Reclaim The Test Site I last year, please come again and bring someone new. If we all bring in a new person, the crowd of 8,000 last year will swell to 16,000.

SNAP will help organize local affinity groups at our March 5th meeting and a non-violence training workshop at our April 2nd meeting.

APT needs financial help to organize this demonstration. Please send what you can. Mention that you are with the SNAP affinity group. Make checks payable to American Peace Test, and send to: APT, P.O. Box 26725, Las Vegas, NV 89126.

☞ Steering Committee Meeting

Sunday, February 12th, 6:00 pm

(Not Feb. 5th as announced in the Nov. Newsletter)

Potluck Dinner, Main Course and Utensils Provided

Place: 16 Dixon Lane, Bishop
Call 873-6445 for directions or info

Topics of discussion include programs for our March and April meetings, updates on APT, future activities. The Steering Committee is composed of those people who are interested enough to get involved. Everyone is welcome. See you there!

January Steering Committee Report

Nine people attended our first Steering Committee meeting of 1989. We reviewed the past year's activities and discussed the coming year. Much has been accomplished by SNAP, yet there is so much more that could be done. We will continue with our regular group meetings (first Sunday of each month), public programs, newsletter, Hiroshima Day Anniversary event, Christmas Carolling, and the Peace Balloon Rally. A major focus in the next few months will be on the APT action at the Nevada Test Site, Reclaim the Test Site II, held on April 7-16.

New Ideas

Several ideas for new SNAP activities were brought up at the meeting. Great ideas like bringing the Center For Defense Information weekly television show to our area, bringing in an art exhibition of work by survivors of the Hiroshima A-bomb, and participating in a sister city program with a city in the Soviet Union.

We have the information to get started on these projects. Unfortunately, our energies are taken up with continuing our current activities. But if new people get involved, we can make these things happen. It's up to you.

If you're interested in working on these or other ideas, please call Bob Jellison at 873-6445 or come to our Feb. 5th general meeting or Feb. 12th Steering Committee meeting.

Balloon Rally Photo Contest

The winner of our photo contest is Joseph Valdez of Benicia, Calif. He has won a free half-hour balloon flight for two donated by High Sierra Ballooning.

We thank all those who submitted entries and Phillips Camera in Bishop for helping out. A print is being made of the winning shot and will be given to the Bishop Chamber of Commerce in appreciation of their help in publicizing the event. Hopefully it will be displayed at their visitor center in Bishop.

Peace Balloon Festival In Russia

Word comes from Mollie Starbuck that our SNAP Peace Balloon Rally has stimulated like-minded balloonists and sponsors to arrange a giant balloon festival in Russia this May. It should receive international TV coverage and advance publicity. Congratulations to everyone who worked so hard to make our festival a beautiful and inspiring event.

Help Support SNAP

SNAP is an all volunteer organization that depends on the generous contributions of its supporters. Most of our expenses are for printing and mailing the newsletter and purchasing educational pamphlets, books, and videos. This newsletter comes free-of-charge, we have no subscription or membership fees. If you have not made a contribution lately, please do so today. Your contribution of $10 or $15 or whatever you can make will help keep the newsletter coming.

From the Editor

Thank you to those who contributed to this month's newsletter and the folks who helped to get it out: Bob & Kerry Jellison, Mollie Starbuck, Marion Helling, and Jeff Cook.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT AND ACTION ALERTS

Fiscal Year 1990

From The Friends Committee on National Legislation:

As soon as the excitement of the inauguaral celebration calms down, Congress will face an apparently unsolvable problem. How can Congress come up with a budget that meets the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings deficit reduction requirement this year WITHOUT cutting military spending, WITHOUT raising taxes, and WITHOUT dismantling what remains of domestic discretionary programs? Described in this way, Congress's task is an almost impossible one.

ACTION: Urge your representative and senators to consider a broader question. The federal budget can provide for REAL security for this nation, with a cooperative posture toward other nations, and social programs that meet the needs of low-income Americans. Such a budget could be funded adequately by a fair and progressive tax. Affordable housing, child nutrition, health care, debt relief for third world nations, and full payment of U.N. dues can all be accommodated by re-orienting the priorities reflected in federal budget proposals. President Reagan's final budget proposal was introduced on January 9; President Bush's proposal is expected near the end of the month. Now is the perfect time to begin or renew a correspondence with your Congressional delegation about budget prorities.

Defense Budget 1990

From The Nuclear Arms Control Hotline:

The final Reagan budget has been under preliminary consideration in Congress. No serious action is expected until the Bush Administration sends its budget modifications to Congress.

Reagan's request for the military is $315.2 billion for Fiscal Year 1990 and $330.8 in Fiscal Year 1991. This amounts to an increase, above inflation of 2% each year. Once again, top budgetary priority has been given to a new generation of weapon systems.

Some major items in the budget request include:

- $5.9 billion for the Star Wars program in FY 1990, a 46% increase over last year, and $7 billion for FY 1991.
- $2.4 billion for the MX Missile next year, including $222 million for procurement of trains and rail cars for rail garrison deployment. No funds were requested for the Midgetman program.
- $94.6 million dollars has been requested for a new Navy sea-based anti-satellite (ASAT) weapon.
- $4 billion dollars has been requested to bring the Stealth bomber (B2) into production this year.

On February 15, President Bush faces one of his first major national security decisions. Congress passed legislation in 1988 to permit the next president to decide how to spend $350 million on new land-based missiles. The Bush Administration may decide to spend these funds on the MX Missile rail-garrison program, a proposed basing mode that would deploy MX Missiles on U.S. rail lines around the country.

ACTION: Contact your Representative and Senators immediately to express strong opposition to any additional funding for the MX rail-garrison program. Ask them to inform President Bush and National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft that moving forward with the rail garrison plan is a budget buster and poses a serious threat to our national security.

Where to Write or Call

Senator Alan Cranston -or-
Senator Pete Wilson
Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Cranston: 202-224-3553
Wilson: 202-224-3841

Hon. Bill Thomas (Inyo) -or-
Hon. Richard Lehman (Mono)
House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Thomas: 202-225-2915
Lehman: 202-225-4540

Capitol Hill Switchboard: 202-224-3121
Executive Office of the President: 202-456-7639

For copies of a Military Budget Analysis write Council for a Livable World at 100 Maryland Ave., NE., Washington, DC 20002 or call 202-543-4100.

For more legislative information, write to the Friends Committee on National Legislation, 245 Second St., NE, Washington, DC 20002 or call 202-547-6000.

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